



State of Tennessee Department of Children's Services

Administrative Policies and Procedures: 18.25-DOE

Subject: Placement Decisions And Justifications

Supersedes: DYD 17.12

Approved by:

Effective date:

07/01/1990

Authority:

TCA 37-5-106

ACA Standard:

2-9344, 2-9386,
2-9390, 2-9397

- I. APPLICATION: To all Department of Children's Services employees and students.
- II. POLICY: The decision as to each student's placement shall be made by the student's classification or special services staffing team, with the participation of persons who have performed the student's assessment. The student shall be placed in the least restrictive environment capable of meeting the student's treatment and security needs. All students suspected of being educationally handicapped and in need of special education services shall be assessed in accordance with the Department of Education Rules, Regulations, and Minimum Standards for the Governance of Public Schools in the State of Tennessee.
- III. PROCEDURES:
 - A. During the classification staffing, classification staffing team members shall make at least a primary and secondary placement recommendation. An exception to this will be that placement decision for mentally retarded student shall be made by the special services staffing team.
 - B. If admission of the student into the placement of first choice is delayed for any reason, the classification staffing team shall determine an interim placement for the student. Interim placements do not excuse the obligation to meet the student's needs.
 - C. The classification and special services staffing summaries shall present problems, strengths, and recommendations that lead to and justify the placement recommendations. The staffing summary shall include a statement of any dissenting opinions.

- D. The classification staffing summary shall be reviewed, signed, and returned by the unit supervisor to the team leader for distribution.
- E. As soon as possible following a student's certification of need of in-patient mental health treatment that is not available in the Department of Children's Services, the DMH/MR Liaison shall be notified and referral and transfer procedures initiated.
- F. If the student is suspected of being in need of special education services the classification staffing team shall review the Integrated Assessment Report and recommend specific services. For those students suspected of being in need of special education services, who are classified by community treatment programs, determination for need of special education services will be accomplished by the local school system or the community residential program if the program has an in-house school.
- G. All suspected mentally retarded students will be individually evaluated in accordance with procedures set forth by the American Association of Mental Deficiency (AAMD) The Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards for the Governance of Public Schools in the state of Tennessee.
- H. Students determined to be moderately, severely, or profoundly retarded in accordance with AAMD definitions shall not be placed at a Youth Development Center. Students who have been identified as moderately, severely, or profoundly retarded will be served by the Department of Mental Health and Retardation (DMH/MR).
- I. All student's determined to be mildly mentally retarded shall be served in community based programs rather than Youth Development Centers unless the Commissioner of Children's Services or designee grants an exception. No student determined to be mildly retarded will be placed at a youth development center if necessary support services recommend on a prioritized basis for his treatment and habilitation cannot be provided at the youth development center or if determined by qualified professionals conducting evaluations for the Department of Children's Services that placement of the student in a youth development center is inappropriate. Recommended academic and vocational education, medical treatment, psychological and psychiatric treatment, and drug or alcohol treatment are all support services that are priority services.
- J. Representatives from the Department of Education and DMH/MR will be invited to the special services staffing of all mentally retarded students. Each representative will be sent a copy of the staffing summary within five (5) days, excluding weekends and holidays, of the staffing.

IV. Forms: None

**(Note: This Policy Cannot Be Revised Without Prior Permission
of Chancery Court, Davidson County, Nashville, Tennessee.)**